

Message Text

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54

ACTION EA-09

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TAGS: NONE

SUBJECT: PUBLIC AFFAIRS ASSESSMENT: PSYCHOLOGICAL

IMPACT ON THE U.S. IMAGE OF U.S.

ECONOMIC NEGOTIATIONS

REF: USIA 5974-C

1. FORMAL NEGOTIATIONS ON A TRADE AND INVESTMENT AGREEMENT TO SUPPLANT DEFUNCT LAUREL-LANGLEY TREATY SCHEDULED BEGIN MARCH 29 IN WASHINGTON. TALKS WILL CONTINUE OVER AS YET INDEFINITE PERIOD, PROBABLY BOTH IN MANILA AND WASHINGTON.

2. OPINION SURVEY CONDUCTED IN URBAN MANILA IN MID-1973 (SEE IOR REPORT R-30-73) SHOWS SLIGHT MAJORITY FELT U.S. INVESTMENTS SHOULD BE EXPANDED, WHILE 21 PERCENT BELIEVED THEY SHOULD BE REDUCED OR ELIMINATED. WHILE NO COMPARABLE TREND DATA AVAILABLE, NEGATIVE VIEWS IN MID-'73 WERE SOMEWHAT GREATER AMONG YOUTH AND STUDENTS, AND EDUCATED GUESS IS THAT TODAY'S READINGS, ALTHOUGH STILL PREDOMINANTLY PRO-U.S. INVESTMENT, WOULD BE SLIGHTLY LESS FAVORABLE DUE GREATER PROPORTION YOUTH IN POPULATION.

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3. FROM PUBLIC AFFAIRS STANDPOINT MISSION BELIEVES IT VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE ISOLATE ABOVE TALKS IN PUBLIC EYE FROM OTHER PENDING DISCUSSIONS ON SPECIFIC ISSUES AND COMMODITIES (E.G., GATT MTN NEGOTIATIONS IN GENERAL AND TROPICAL PRODUCTS SPECIFICALLY, OTHER GSP INCLUSIONS AND EXCLUSIONS, SUGAR, PENDING PROBLEMS IN SHIPPING AND AIR TRANSPORT, ETC.).

4. AS IN CASE BASE NEGOTIATIONS, DISTINCT POSSIBILITY EXISTS THAT MARCOS GOVERNMENT WILL WAGE MEDIA CAMPAIGN TO BOLSTER REGIME'S GENERAL NEGOTIATING POSITION AND IMAGE AS GUARDIAN OF NATIONAL INTEREST. SUCH A CAMPAIGN WOULD PROBABLY BE AIMED AT THIRD WORLD AND DOMESTIC AUDIENCES WITH U.S. AS WHIPPING BOY. HOWEVER, IT APPEARS UNLIKELY THAT TONE OR CONTENT OF CAMAPGIN WOULD BECOME TOO IRRATIONAL OR THREATENING, SINCE HERETOFORE MARCOS HAS BEEN ASSIDUOUSLY CAREFUL NOT ROCK ECONOMIC BOAT TOO VIGOROUSLY LEST HE SCARE AWAY NEEDED FOREIGN INVESTMENT.

5. UNLIKE BASE NEGOTIATIONS CASE, MISSION BELIEVES TIMELY RELEASE OF GOOD MEDIA MATERIAL BY USIS CAN PROVE HELPFUL IN COUNTERING ATTEMPTS TO PORTRAY U.S. ECONOMIC POLICIES AS ANTEDILUVIAN AND IMPERIALISTIC AND AMERICAN PRIVATE ENTERPRISE AS RAPACIOUS AND EXPLOITATIVE. HOWEVER, WE SHOULD NOT YIELD TO TEMPTATION INDULGE IN POINT-BY-POINT SLUGGING MATCH IN PRESS WHICH NOT ONLY UNDIGNIFIED BUT WHICH WOULD PROVE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE DUE GOVERNMENT CONTROLS OVER MEDIA.

6. AGENCY BACKSTOPPING DESIRED FALLS INTO THREE CATEGORIES: (A) COVERAGE ACTUAL ECONOMIC NEGOTIATIONS; (B) AD HOC REPORTAGE ON OTHER RELATED ISSUES CITED IN PARA 3 ABOVE; AND (C) BACK-ROUNDERS AIMED AT SETTING SCENE FOR VARIOUS PHASES TALKS AND/OR AT REFUTING NEGATIVE PROPAGANDA ON U.S. ECONOMIC POLICIES OR PRIVATE INVESTMENT. IN (A), WE OF COURSE ABLE HANDLE COVERAGE THIS END BUT HOPE AGENCY/STATE CAN KEEP US AU COURANT RE PUBLIC AFFAIRS ASPECTS WASHINGTON TALKS, PLUS PLAYBACK ANY SIGNIFICANT COMMENTARY BY WIRES, U.S. OR THIRD COUNTRY PRESS. WE WOULD USE OUTPUT SELECTIVELY HERE, DEPENDING ON SUBJECT MATTER AND TREATMENT. LIKEWISE IN (B), WE DESIRE ROUTINE COVERAGE AND PARTICULARLY SUPPORTIVE MATERIAL FROM THIRD COUNTRIES WHICH MIGHT HAVE EFFECT OF SHIFTING ONUS FROM LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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U.S. BACK AND PROVIDING EVIDENCE THAT U.S. IS BUT ONE OF MANY COUNTRIES WITH SIMILAR CONCERNS. BACKGROUNDEERS (C) WILL BE SOUGHT BY POST AS NEEDED, BUT PERENNIALY USEFUL ARE FEATURES, VTRS, ETC., ELUCIDATING U.S. ECONOMIC POLICIES VIS-A-VIS THIRD WORLD; U.S. TRADE AND AID TO LDCS; PROGRESS TOWARD IMPLEMENTING KISSINGER UN PROPOSALS; POSITIVE ASPECTS OF U.S. OVERSEAS PRIVATE INVESTMENT AND MULTINATIONALS.

7. WILL ADVISE AGENCY FURTHER RE SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS IN
COURSE NEGOTIATIONS.

8. MISSION CONCURS.
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